

## BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Application No.: 10/815,082

Amendment Date: November 29, 2006

Reply to Office Action: January 25, 2006 and November 3, 2006

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### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-10 and 11-27 remain in this application. Claims 1, 13, 21, and 24-26 have been amended. Claim 11 has been cancelled.

#### **Non-compliant amendment**

The examiner stated that at least in claim 1 the newly added text was not underlined. Upon review of claim 1 Applicants realised that the word "and" (situated before the following underlined text "wherein the optical energy is guided in a mode having a nonlinear refractive index of less than about  $10^{-18}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W") was not underlined. Accordingly, the word "and" is now underlined.

**Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.**

The Examiner stated that the term "soliton" is being interpreted as "optical energy". However, the term "soliton" applies to a very special case of optical energy. The term "soliton" is well known in the art of optics. It's a pulse of optical energy that travels without changing its shape.

Applicants' attorney is including several references including pgs. 60-61 from the book entitled "Fiber Optics Communications", by Joseph Pallais, along with several papers that explain the solitons in more detail.

Claim 24 has been amended to state that the optical energy propagates as temporal soliton that has a wavelength within the photonic band gap. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 24 is not indefinite.

**Claims 1, 4, 6-8, 13, 15, 17, 18 and 25-27 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawanishi et al (US 6,404,966 B1).**

Applicant's claim 1 states that the core region with a loss of less than about 300 dB/km.

The Examiner stated that Kawanishi et al teach an optical fiber where “The photonic band gap structure guides the optical energy substantially within the core region with loss of about 0.01 dB/km”. This statement is different from that made in the cited reference. Col. 3, lns. 39-42 of the Kawanishi state that “The optical fiber according to the present embodiment can be expected to have a loss characteristic of about 0.01 dB/km”.

That is, the reference never disclosed such fiber, the Kawanishi et al was simply hoping that the fiber would be capable of this performance. In fact it is not. Because it requires more than an air filled core to achieve this performance, and because Kawanishi et al does not describe these factors, this statement is akin to telling those of skill in the art to look for a needle in the haystack. The Kawanishi reference does not disclose an enabling embodiment that allows the fiber have a loss characteristic of about 0.01 dB/km.

Therefore, claim 1 is not obvious over the Kawanishi reference.

Furthermore, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of the original claim 11, which states that “the optical energy is guided in a mode having a nonlinear refractive index of less than about  $10^{-18}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W.”

This parameter contributes to the low loss and is not taught or disclosed by the cited reference. In fact, pg. 7, paragraph [0033] of the Applicants specification discloses that in typically the guided modes have effective nonlinear refractive indices  $n_2$  ranging from  $2 \times 10^{-16}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W to  $4 \times 10^{-16}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W while some of the claims call for it being less than  $10^{-18}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W. This is at least a factor of 10 different (20 times less) than that of the known fibers.

Claims 4, 6-8 13, 15, 17 and 18 depend from claim 1 as their base claim and, therefore, explicitly incorporate the language of claim 1. Accordingly Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 4, 6-8 13, 15, 17 and 18 are not obvious over the Kawanishi reference.

Claims 25-27 (and 13) state that the “optical fiber is configured to support a temporal soliton having a peak power of greater than about 1 MW”. Such fiber is not disclosed by the Kawanishi reference, and the Kawanishi reference provides no incentive for having a fiber

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with this characteristics. Accordingly, claims 13 and 25-27 are not obvious over this reference.

**Claims 1-3, 5, 6-10, 13, 14, 16-18 and 25-27 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Libori et al (US 6,792,188 B2).**

Although Libori makes a statement that a low loss fiber is desirable, Libori does not define what is meant by a "low loss", nor provides an enabling embodiment that has the losses in the Applicant's claimed range. A mere statement that something is desirable, without a way of how to achieve such a result, does not constitute an enabling disclosure. The conditions for achievement of loss less than 300 dB/km (or less than 50 dB/km, or less than 20 dB/km) were disclosed by the Applicants and were not known to one of ordinary skill in the art, although there was a long felt need to have a fiber with these characteristics.

Furthermore, as stated above, Claims 25-27 call for the "optical fiber is configured to support a temporal soliton having a peak power of greater than about 1 MW". Such fiber is not disclosed by the Libori reference, and the reference provides no incentive for having a fiber with this characteristics.

Accordingly, claims 1-3, 5, 6-10, 13, 14, 16-18 and 25-27 are not unpatentable over Libori, et al.

**Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 19-27 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fajardo et al (US 6,444,133 B1).**

The Fajardo reference does not disclose the fiber with either a loss of less than about 300 dB/km, less than 50 dB/km, etc, or that has a nonlinear refractive index of less than about  $10^{-18}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W, or less than  $5 \times 10^{-19}$  cm<sup>2</sup>/W. As stated above according to applicant's claims, this nonlinear refractive index of one to two orders of magnitude smaller than similar known fibers (and certainly not within general ranges disclosed by prior art fiber references), and this characteristic has not been disclosed in any of the cited reference. Since the cited references, neither singly, nor in combination do not recite optical fiber with this feature, claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 19-27 (or other claim) are not obvious over Fajardo, or other cited references.

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### **Conclusion**

Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of records, applicant believes the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Applicant believes that no extension of time is necessary to make this Reply timely. Should applicant be in error, applicant respectfully requests that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Svetlana Z. Short at 607-974-0412.

DATE: 11-29-06

Respectfully submitted,



Svetlana Z. Short

Attorney for Assignee

Registration Number: 34,432

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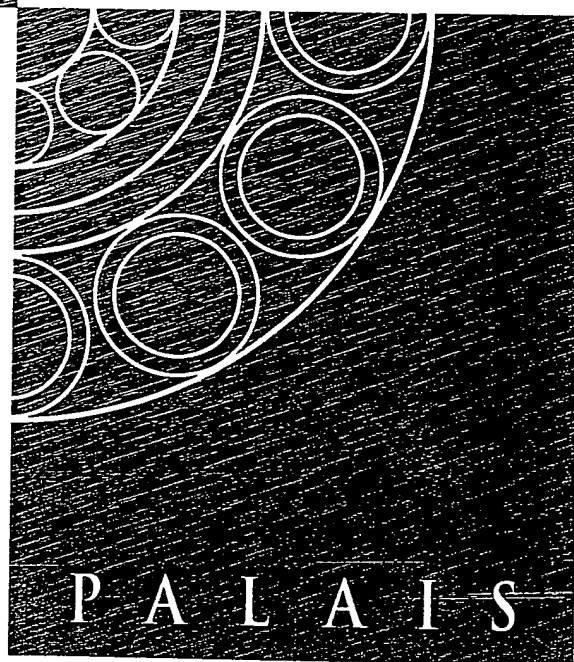
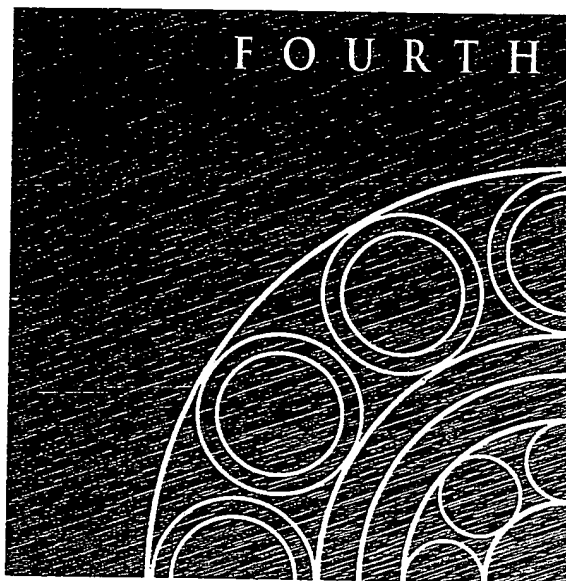
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where the slope  $M_0$  is approximately  $-0.095$  ps/(nm<sup>2</sup> × km),  $\lambda_0$  is the zero-dispersion wavelength, and all wavelengths are in nm. Values of  $M_0$  and  $\lambda_0$  are often given by the fiber manufacturer. The minus sign is needed because of the negative slope of the dispersion curve. Some reverse the sign conventions followed in this section, so that their dispersion curves have a positive slope and the minus sign is missing in Eq. (3-14).

### Example 3-3

Compute the material dispersion at  $1.55 \mu\text{m}$  if the zero-dispersion wavelength is  $1.3 \mu\text{m}$ .

#### Solution:

It is most straightforward to solve the preceding equation by using the wavelengths expressed in nm. Otherwise, the slope coefficient  $M_0$  would have to be converted into the appropriate units. Thus

$$M = \frac{-0.095}{4} \left( 1550 - \frac{1300^4}{1550^3} \right) \\ = -18.6 \text{ ps}/(\text{nm} \times \text{km})$$

a result that checks nicely with the value obtained directly from Fig. 3-8.

### Example 3-4

Compute the pulse spread when the light source emits at  $1320 \text{ nm}$  and has a  $2\text{-nm}$  spectral width. The zero-dispersion wavelength is  $1300 \text{ nm}$ .

#### Solution:

The dispersion turns out to have a magnitude of  $1.86 \text{ ps}/(\text{nm} \times \text{km})$ , so that Eq. (3-14) yields a spread of  $\Delta(\tau/L) = 2 \times 1.86 = 3.72 \text{ ps/km}$ . A  $10\text{-km}$  length of this material would produce a pulse spread of only  $37.2 \text{ ps} = 0.0372$

ns, considerably smaller than that computed in Examples 3-1 and 3-2 for propagation at wavelengths farther away from the dispersion minimum.

## Solitons

Pulse spreading reduces the bandwidth and data capacity of a fiber communications link in the manner described later in this section. Because of this, many techniques for minimizing pulse spreading have been pursued. A few that we already know about are (1) operating at the zero-dispersion wavelength and (2) choosing very coherent (small spectral width) light sources. These solutions (often applied together) have been common since the mid-1980s. Improvements now take the form of shifting the fiber's zero-dispersion point to wavelengths of lower fiber attenuation and producing more coherent laser sources.

Another technique that shows promise for reducing pulse spreading is the production of *solitons*.<sup>3</sup> A soliton is a pulse that travels along a fiber without changing shape. How can this happen? The actual procedure is fairly complicated, but some insight into soliton propagation can be easily developed. Pulses broaden because dispersion causes some wavelengths emitted by the light source to travel faster than other wavelengths. All we need do is find some property of the fiber that counters this tendency. It turns out that such a property does exist. It is a fiber nonlinearity where the index of refraction depends upon the intensity of the light beam. Since the pulse velocity depends on the index of refraction, it is clear that the intensity of the beam can itself influence the speed of the various wavelengths propagating along the fiber. Usually this phenomenon is not observed, because it is quite small and requires a moderately large amount of optical power before becoming significant.

To form a soliton, the initial pulse must have a particular peak energy and pulse shape.

To be specific, the product of pulse energy and pulse width must be a constant. The value of the constant depends on the magnitudes of the dispersion and the nonlinearity. With too little power, the nonlinearity is too weak to be effective in compensating for dispersion. If the power is too great, then the pulse may actually continually change widths as it travels, owing to imperfect (and distance-dependent) compensation. In addition, the nonlinear compensation is such that solitons are produced only at wavelengths longer than the zero-dispersion wavelength in glass fibers. That is, the nonlinearity acts with dispersion to further broaden pulses at the shorter wavelengths and only compensates at the longer ones. We conclude that soliton pulses can be expected in silica fibers only when operating in the 1300- to 1600-nm range.

Although solitons retain pulse widths during propagation, solitons do attenuate just like other waves. It will be imperative for long systems that the optical beam be amplified periodically so that the pulse energy not fall below that required for soliton maintenance. Various optical amplifiers (to be described in Section 6-7) are candidates for the amplification process.

Soliton widths of a few picoseconds are realizable. The corresponding data rates (the inverse of the soliton widths) are over 10 Gbps. Multigigabit-per-second systems covering many thousand kilometers with amplifier spacings of several tens of kilometers can be designed with soliton pulses. The product of data rate and fiber path length for such systems is far greater than can be achieved by more conventional fiber techniques.

### Information Rate

Pulse spreading limits the information capacity of any transmission system in the manner described in what follows. For numerical calcu-

lations we will use the spreads generated by material dispersion. The equations developed apply regardless of the cause of the distortion. We will investigate the limits on both analog and digital links. Without long and complex derivations, exact results cannot be obtained. Reasonable limits can be developed based on approximate intuitive analyses. The results obtained will be useful in first-order design and will deepen understanding of the ability of fiber links to carry information.

First, consider a sinusoidally modulated beam of light (like that shown in Fig. 3-5). The modulation frequency is  $f$  and the period is  $T = 1/f$ . Suppose that the source radiates optic wavelengths between  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_2$ . How much delay between the fastest and slowest wavelength is acceptable? Figure 3-9 shows the received power at  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_2$  when the delay is equal to half the modulation period; that is,

$$\Delta\tau = \frac{T}{2} \quad (3-15)$$

With this amount of delay, the modulation cancels out completely when the two waves are added. Modulated power carried at wavelengths between  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_2$  will have delays smaller than  $T/2$  and will partially cancel, resulting in a small signal variation at the receiver. If we take Eq. (3-15) as the maximum

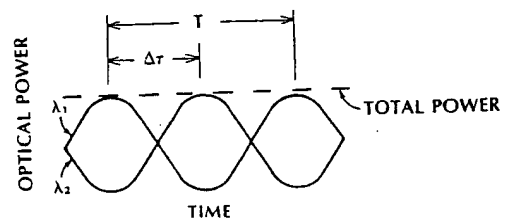


Figure 3-9 Canceling of the modulation when two carrier wavelengths have a delay of half the modulation period.  $\Delta\tau = T/2$ .



# Encyclopedia of Laser Physics and Technology

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## Solitons

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*Definition: pulses with a certain balance of nonlinear and dispersive effects*

In general, the temporal and spectral shape of a short optical pulse changes during propagation in a transparent medium due to the Kerr effect and dispersion. Under certain circumstances, however, the effects of Kerr nonlinearity and dispersion can exactly cancel each other, apart from a constant phase delay per unit propagation distance, so that the temporal and spectral shape of the pulses is preserved even over long propagation distances. The conditions for that to happen are:

- For a positive value of the nonlinear coefficient  $n_2$  (as is usual for most media) the dispersion needs to be anomalous. The pulse shape is given by:
 
$$P(t) = P_p \operatorname{sech}^2(t/\tau) = \frac{P_p}{\cosh^2(t/\tau)}$$
- The pulse duration  $\tau$  has to be that of an unchirped  $\operatorname{sech}^2$  pulse (assuming that the group delay dispersion is constant):

$$E_p = \frac{2|D|}{|\gamma|\tau}$$

- The pulse energy  $E_p$  and soliton pulse duration  $\tau$  have to meet the following condition:

Here, the full-width-at-half-maximum pulse duration is about 1.76 times  $\tau$ ,  $\gamma$  is the SPM coefficient (in rad per Watt and



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peak of the pulse would experience if only the nonlinearity alone would act on it. This soliton phase shift is constant over time or frequency, i.e., it does not lead to a chirp, and it is in many situations not relevant.

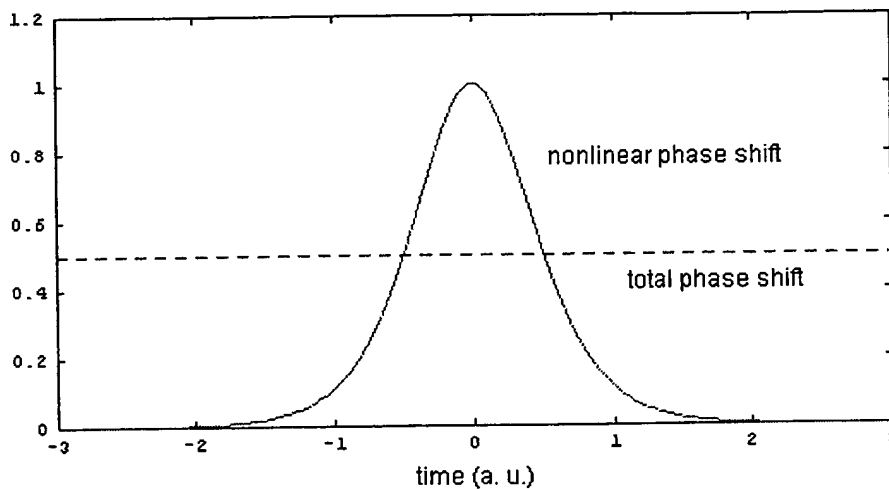


Fig.: Solid curve: time-dependent nonlinear phase shift alone (without dispersion), which is proportional to the optical intensity. Dotted curve: overall phase shift, resulting from the combined action of nonlinearity and dispersion on a soliton. The constant phase shift does not modify the temporal or spectral shape of the pulse.

The most remarkable fact is actually not the possibility of such a balance of dispersion and nonlinearity, but rather the fact that soliton solutions of the nonlinear wave equation are very stable: even for substantial deviations of the initial pulse from the exact soliton solution, the pulse automatically "finds" the correct soliton shape while shredding some of its energy into a so-called dispersive wave, a weak background which has too little intensity to experience significant nonlinear effects and temporally broadens as a result of dispersion. Solitons are also very stable against changes of the properties of the medium, provided that these changes occur over distances which are long compared to the so-called soliton period (defined as the propagation distance in which the constant phase delay is  $\pi/4$ ). This means that solitons can adiabatically adapt their shape to slowly varying parameters of the medium. Also, solitons can accommodate to some amount of higher-order dispersion; they then automatically adjust their shape to

then automatically adjust their shape to achieve the mentioned balance under the given conditions.

If the pulse energy is the square of an integer number times the fundamental soliton energy, one has a so-called higher-order soliton. Such pulses do not have a preserved shape, but their shape periodically varies, with the period being the above mentioned soliton period. However, higher-order solitons can break up into fundamental solitons under the influence of higher-order dispersion and other disturbing effects. They are by far not as stable as fundamental solitons.

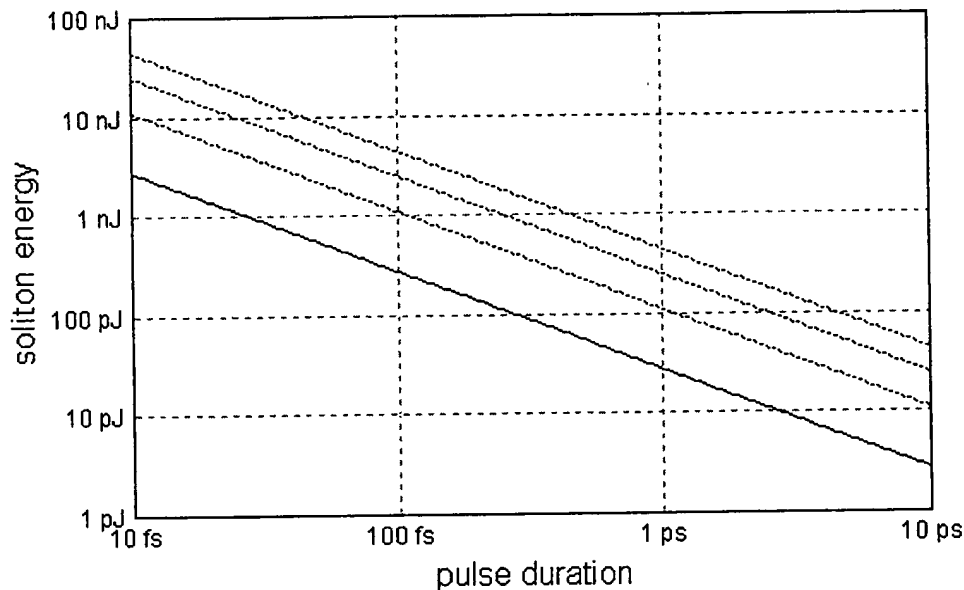


Fig.: Relation between soliton pulse energy and pulse duration in a single-mode fiber. The solid curve applies to fundamental solitons, the dotted curves to higher-order solitons (orders 2, 3, 4).

Fundamental soliton pulses are technically very important, in particular for long-distance optical fiber communications and in mode-locked lasers ( $\rightarrow$  soliton mode locking). In the latter situation, soliton-like pulses can be formed when the typically lumped pieces of dispersion and nonlinearity in the laser cavity are sufficiently weak per cavity round trip. Solitons are also applied in various techniques for pulse compression using optical fibers; an example is adiabatic soliton compression.

Soliton propagation, possibly with additional disturbing effects, can be investigated with numerical simulations

(→ pulse propagation modeling). There are also some analytical tools, e.g. *soliton perturbation theory*, where one derives equations for small deviations of pulses from the ideal soliton shape.

Apart from the temporal solitons as discussed above, there are also *spatial solitons*. In that case, a nonlinearity of the medium (possibly of photorefractive type) cancels the diffraction, so that a beam with constant beam radius can be formed even in a medium which would be homogeneous without the influence of the light beam.

### References

- [1] L. F. Mollenauer, R. H. Stolen, and J. P. Gordon, "Experimental observation of picosecond pulse narrowing and solitons in optical fibers", Phys. Rev. Lett. 45, 1095 (1980)

See also: Kerr effect, dispersion, soliton period,  $\text{sech}^2$ -shaped pulses, higher-order solitons, adiabatic soliton compression, pulse compression, Gordon-Haus jitter, pulse propagation modeling

Ask RP Photonics for advice on details of soliton pulse propagation, e.g. numerical modeling.



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## Quasi-soliton pulses

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*Definition: soliton-like pulses in lasers or fiber-optic links*

Optical pulses circulating in the cavity of a mode-locked laser can experience chromatic dispersion and the Kerr nonlinearity. If the dispersion is anomalous, this can lead to the formation of quasi-soliton pulses. These are not exactly solitons, since the dispersion and nonlinearity usually come in discrete portions, and the pulse energy varies during a cavity round trip. Nevertheless, the pulses may behave like solitons if the effects of dispersion and nonlinearity are not too strong during one round trip, and other effects are still weaker. One can then exploit the advantages of soliton mode locking, namely the generation of rather short pulses with low chirp.

A special kind of quasi-soliton pulses has been discovered in semiconductor lasers, particularly in vertical external cavity surface-emitting lasers (VECSELs). Here, the effect of the Kerr nonlinearity is usually rather weak, but light-induced changes of the carrier density can lead to nonlinear phase changes which are similar to those from the Kerr effect with negative  $n_2$  coefficient, even though they do not instantly follow the variations of optical intensity. In that case, quasi-soliton pulses can be formed in the *normal* dispersion regime. A consequence is that the pulses can be close to the Fourier transform limit.

Soliton-like pulses also occur in fiber-optic links.

Reference:

- R. Paschotta et al., "Soliton-like pulse shaping mechanism in passively mode-locked surface-emitting semiconductor lasers", Appl. Phys. B 75, 445 (2002)

See also: solitons, mode locking, soliton mode locking

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## Changes to problems 3 and 4 from HW #5 and a modest simplification.

### *The changes.*

- (i) Agrawal and many others use  $T_0$  instead of the intensity FWHM pulse width  $\tau_p$  dispersion lengths where  $T_0$  is the characteristic time for a sech pulse according to  $E = E_0 \text{sech}(t/T_0)$ . As given in the class notes,  $\tau_p = 1.763 * T_0$  for a sech pulse. dispersion lengths are defined as:

$$L_D = \frac{T_0^2}{\beta_2} \quad \text{and} \quad L'_D = \frac{T_0^3}{\beta_3}$$

The homework problem specifies a Gaussian pulse with  $\tau_p = 100$  fs so it makes characteristic time for a Gaussian  $T_0$  defined by  $E = E_0 \exp[-t^2/T_0^2]$ . In this case  $\tau_p = 1.665 * T_0$  to find  $T_0$ , but people often use the relation for a sech pulse anyway. It isn't large, so do as you see fit. Just make clear what your choice is.

The reason for the emphasis on sech **pulses** is that **soliton pulses** have a sech profile. So interesting in their own right and are of key interest for high-speed communications.

- (ii) I'd like to change the information requested as well.

- (a) Plot the spectral phase at  $z=L$  in addition to the other plots.
- (b) Use a medium length of  $\pi/2$  and  $\pi$  and don't worry about plotting the spectrum. This way you see what is going on, especially if you look at lengths intermediate between  $z = \pi/2$ . You might want to take a second look at the notes section on solitons and **definition of "N"**.

*The simplification. You can do the following instead if you like:*

The NSE is:

$$\frac{\partial A}{\partial z} = -i\beta_2 \frac{\partial^2 A}{\partial \tau^2} + \frac{1}{6}\beta_3 \frac{\partial^3 A}{\partial \tau^3} + i\gamma A^2 A$$

where  $A(z, \tau)$  is the electric field envelope. Recall we have  $A(z, \tau) = P_0 U(z, \tau)$ ,

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solilo-quize \-kwiz\ vi -quized; -quizing (1759): to utter a soliloquy  
: talk to oneself — solilo-quize-er n  
solilo-quy \sə-ˈli-ə-kwē\ n, pl -quies [LL *soliloquium*, fr. L *solus* alone  
+ *loqui* to speak] (ca. 1604) 1: the act of talking to oneself 2: a  
dramatic monologue that gives the illusion of being a series of un-  
spoken reflections

sol  
MF  
whole  
EAT b  
one's  
some-  
aft by  
IMPO-  
meone

solip-sism \sə-ˈlɪp-siz-əm, -səl-əp-\ n [L *solus* alone + *ipse* self] (1874)  
: a theory holding that the self can know nothing but its own modifica-  
tions and that the self is the only existent thing — solip-sist \sə-ˈlɪp-  
sɪst, -səl-əp-, -sə-ˈlɪp-\ n — solip-sis-tic \sə-ˈlɪp-sɪs-tɪk, -səl-əp-\ adj —  
solip-sis-ti-cal-ly \-ti-k(ə)-lē\ adv

solitaire \sə-ˈtɪr-ə, -tɪr-ə\ n [F, fr. *solitaire*, adj., solitary, fr. L  
*solitarius*] (1727) 1: a single gem (as a diamond) set alone 2: any of  
various card games that can be played by one person

solitary \sə-ˈlɪ-tər-ē\ adj [ME, fr. L *solitarius*, fr. *solitas* aloneness, fr.  
*solus* alone] (14c) 1 a: being, living, or going alone or without com-  
panions b: saddened by isolation 2: UNFREQUENTED, DESOLATE 3  
: taken, passed, or performed without companions (a ~ ramble) 4  
: being at once single and isolated (a ~ example) 5 a: occurring  
single and not as part of a group or cluster (flowers terminal and ~)  
b: not gregarious, colonial, social, or compound (~ bees) *syn* see  
ALONE — sol-i-tar-i-ly \sə-ˈlɪ-tər-ē-lē\ adv — sol-i-tar-i-ness \sə-ˈlɪ-tər-  
ē-nəs\ n

solitary n, pl -tar-ies (15c) 1: one who lives or seeks to live a solitary  
life: RECLUSE. 2: solitary confinement in prison  
sol-i-tar-i-ous \sə-ˈlɪ-tər-i-əs\ n pl [solitary + -ous] (ca. 1975): solitary waves  
(as in a gaseous plasma) that retain their shape and speed after collid-  
ing with each other

solitude \sə-ˈlɪ-t(y)ūd-\ n [ME, fr. MF, fr. L *solitudo*, *solitudo*, fr.  
*solus*] (14c) 1: the quality or state of being alone or remote from  
society: SECLUSION 2: a lonely place (as a desert)  
*syn* SOLITUDE, ISOLATION, SECLUSION mean the state of one who is alone.  
SOLITUDE may imply a condition of being apart from all human beings  
or of being cut off by wish or compulsion from one's usual associates;  
ISOLATION stresses detachment from others often involuntarily; SECLU-  
SION suggests a shutting away or keeping apart from others often con-  
noting deliberate withdrawal from the world or retirement to a quiet  
life.

sol-i-tu-din-ian \sə-ˈlɪ-t(y)ūd-ən-er-ē-ən\ n [L *solitudin-*, *solitudo* +  
-ian] (1691): RECLUSE  
sol-i-tu-din-er \sə-ˈlɪ-t(y)ūd-ən-er-\ n [F] (1826): a flexible steel shoe forming part of a  
medieval suit of armor — see ARMOR illustration

sol-mi-zation \sə-ˈmɪ-zə-shən\ n [F *solmisation*, fr. *solmiser* to sol-fa,  
i.e. sol (fr. ML) + *mi* (fr. ML) + -ize- (1730): the act, practice, or  
system of using syllables to denote the tones of a musical scale

sol-o \sə-ˈlɪ-ə\ n, pl solos [It, fr. *solo* alone, fr. L *solus*] (1695) 1 or pl  
sol-i \sə-ˈlɪ-ə\ a: a musical composition for a single voice or instru-  
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sol-lum \sə-ˈlɪ-əm\ n, pl sol-la \-lə\ or solums [NL, fr. L, ground, soil]  
(1935): the altered layer of soil above the parent material that includes  
the A- and B-horizons

sol-lus \sə-ˈlɪ-əs\ adv or adj [L] (1599): ALONE — often used in stage di-  
rections

sol-ute \sə-ˈl(y)ūt-\ n [L *solutus*, pp.] (1902): a dissolved substance  
sol-u-tion \sə-ˈl(y)ū-shən\ n [ME, fr. MF, fr. L *solutio*, *solutio*, fr. *solutus*,  
pp. of *solvere* to loosen, solve] (14c) 1 a: an action or process of  
solving a problem b: an answer to a problem: EXPLANATION; *specif*  
: a set of values of the variables that satisfies an equation 2 a: an  
act or the process by which a solid, liquid, or gaseous substance is  
homogeneously mixed with a liquid or sometimes a gas or solid b: a  
homogeneous mixture formed by this process; *esp*: a single-phase  
liquid system c: the condition of being dissolved 3: a bringing or  
coming to an end or into a state of discontinuity

solution set n (1959) the set of values that satisfy an equation; *also*  
: TRUTH SET

Sol-u-tre-an \sə-ˈl(y)ū-trē-ən\ adj [Solutré, village in France] (1888): of or  
relating to an upper Paleolithic culture characterized by leaf-shaped  
finely flaked stone implements

sol-v-able \sə-ˈvə-bəl, -səl-\ adj (1676): susceptible of solution or of  
being solved, resolved, or explained — sol-v-abil-ty \sə-ˈvə-bəl-  
i-tē-, -səl-\ n

sol-v-ate \sə-ˈvāt, -səl-\ n [solvent + -ate] (1904): an aggregate that  
consists of a solute ion or molecule with one or more solvent molecules;  
*also*: a substance (as a hydrate) containing such ions

solv-ate vt sol-v-ated; sol-vat-ing (1917): to make part of a solvate —  
sol-v-ation \sə-ˈvā-shən, -səl-\ n

Sol-vay process \sə-ˈvā-vē-\ n [Ernest Solvay †1922 Belg. chemist] (1888)  
: a process for making soda from common salt by passing carbon diox-  
ide into ammoniacal brine resulting in precipitation of sodium bicar-  
bonate which is then calcined to carbonate

solve \səlv-, -solv\ vb solved; solv-ing [ME *solven* to loosen, fr. L *solvere*  
to loosen, solve, dissolve, fr. *sed-*, *se-* apart + *luere* to release — more  
at SECEDE, LOSE] vt (1533) 1: to find a solution for (~ a problem) 2  
: to pay (as a debt) in full ~ vi: to solve something (substitute the  
known values of the constants and ~ for x) — sol-ver n

sol-vent \sə-ˈvənt, -səl-\ n (ca. 1727): the quality or state of being  
solvent

sol-vent \sə-ˈvənt, -səl-\ adj [L *solvent*, *solvens*, prp. of *solvere* to dissolve, pay]  
(1630) 1: able to pay all legal debts 2: that dissolves or can dis-  
solve (~ fluids) (~ action of water) — sol-vent-ly adv

solvent n (1671) 1: a usu. liquid substance capable of dissolving or  
dispersing one or more other substances 2: something that provides  
a solution 3: something that eliminates or attenuates something esp.  
unwanted — sol-vent-less \-ləs\ adj

sol-vol-y-sis \sə-ˈvəl-ə-səs, -səl-\ n [NL, fr. E *solvent* + -ol- + -lysis] (ca.  
1924): a chemical reaction (as hydrolysis) of a solvent and solute that  
results in the formation of new compounds — sol-vol-lytic \sə-ˈvəl-  
i-tik, -səl-\ adj

so-ma \sə-ˈmā-\ n [Skt; akin to Av *haoma*, a Zoroastrian ritual drink,  
Gk *hēin* to rain — more at SUCK] (1827) 1: an East Indian leafless  
vine (*Sarcostemma acidum*) of the milkweed family with a milky acid  
juice 2: an intoxicating plant juice of ancient India used as an offer-  
ing to the gods and as a drink of immortality by worshippers in Vedic  
ritual and worshiped as a Vedic god

soma n, pl so-ma-ta \sə-ˈmā-tə\ or somas [NL *somat-*, *soma*, fr. Gk  
*sōmat-*, *sōma* body] (ca. 1885) 1: the body of an organism 2: all of  
an organism except the germ cells 3: CELL BODY

So-ma-li \sə-ˈmāl-ē, -sə-\ n, pl Somali or Somalis (1850) 1: a member  
of a people of Somaliland apparently of mixed Mediterranean and  
Negroid stock 2: the Cushitic language of the Somali people

so many adj (1533) 1: constituting an unspecified number (read so  
many chapters each night) 2: constituting a group or pack (behaved  
like so many animals)

somat- or somato- comb form [NL, fr. Gk *sōmat-*, *sōmato*, fr. *sōmat-*,  
*sōma* body; akin to L *tumēre* to swell — more at THUMB] : body  
(*somatology*)

so-mat-ic \sə-ˈmā-tik, -sə-\ adj [Gk *sōmatikos*, fr. *sōmat-*, *sōma*] (ca. 1775)  
1: of, relating to, or affecting the body esp. as distinguished from the  
germ plasm or the psyche 2: of or relating to the wall of the body  
: PARIETAL — so-mat-i-cal-ly \-i-k(ə)-lē\ adv

somatic cell n (1888): one of the cells of the body that compose the  
tissues, organs, and parts of that individual other than the germ cells

so-ma-tol-o-gy \sə-ˈmā-ˈlɒl-ə-jē\ n [NL *somatologia*, fr. *somat-* + -*logia*  
-logy] (ca. 1878): a branch of anthropology primarily concerned with  
the comparative study of human evolution, variation, and classification  
esp. through measurement and observation — so-ma-to-log-i-cal \sə-  
ˈmā-tə-ˈlɒj-ē-kəl, -sə-ˈmā-tə-\ adj

so-ma-to-med-in \sə-ˈmā-tə-ˈmēd-ən\ n [soma- + -med- (perh. as in  
*intermedin*)] (1972): any of several endogenous peptides produced esp.  
in the liver and dependent on and mediating growth hormone activity  
(as in sulfate uptake by epiphyseal cartilage)

so-ma-to-pleure \sə-ˈmā-tə-ˈplū-ə\ n [NL *somatopleura*, fr. *somat-* +  
Gk *pleura* side] (1874): a complex layer in the embryo of a craniate  
vertebrate consisting of the outer of the two layers into which the lat-  
eral plate of the mesoderm splits together with the ectoderm that  
sheathes it externally and giving rise to the body wall

so-ma-to-sen-sory \sə-ˈmā-tə-ˈsen-(t)s-(ə)-rē\ adj (1960): of, relating to,  
or being sensory activity having its origin elsewhere than in the special  
sense organs (as eyes and ears) and conveying information about the  
state of the body proper and its immediate environment

so-ma-to-stat-in \sə-ˈmā-tə-ˈstāt-ən\ n [soma- + -stat + -in] (ca. 1973)  
: a polypeptide neurohormone that is found esp. in the hypothalamus  
and inhibits the secretion of several other hormones (as growth hor-  
mone, insulin, and gastrin)

\ə\ abut \ˈkɪtən, F table \ˈfɜː\ further \ə\ ash \æ\ ace \æ\ cot, car  
\aʊ\ out \tʃ\ chin \tʃ\ bet \bet\ easy \eɪ\ go \gə\ hit \hɪ\ ice \aɪ  
\ŋ\ sing \ŋ\ go \gə\ law \lɔː\ boy \bɔɪ\ thin \θɪ\ the \ði\ loot \luː\  
yet \jət\ vision \vɪʒən\ k, p, ce, ce, ue, ue, see Guide to Pronunciation

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